

The Historie

Prince. Well, here is my leg.

Fal. And here is my speech; stand aside, Nobilitie.

Ho. O Iesu, this is excellent sport, I faith.

Fal. Weepe not, sweete Queene, for trickling teares are vain.

Ho. O the father, how he holds his countenance?

Fal. For Gods sake, Lords, conuay my trustfull Queene,
For teares doe stop the floud-gates of her eyes.

Ho. O Iesu, he doth it, as like one of these harlotrie plaiers,
as euer I see.

Fal. Peace, good pint-pot, peace, good tickle-braine.

Harry, I doe not onely maruaile, where thou spendest thy
time: but also, how thou art accompanied. For, though the cam-
momill, the more it is troden on, the faster it growes: so youth,
the more it is wasted, the sooner it weares: that thou art my son,
I haue partly thy mothers word, partly my owne opinion, but
chiefly, a villanous trick of thine eye, and a foolish hanging of
thy neather lip, that doth warrant me. If then thou be sonneto
me, here lies the point: why, beeing sonne to mee, art thou so
pointed at? Shall the blessed sonne of heauen, proue a micher,
and eat blacke-berries: a question not to be askt. Shall the son
of England, proue a theefe, and take purses? a question to be
askt. There is a thing, Harry, which thou hast often heard of,
and it is known to many in our land, by the name of pitch. This
pitch, (as ancient writers do report) doth defile: so doth the co-
panie thou keepest: for Harry, now I doe not speake to thee in
drinke, but in teares; not in pleasure, but in pangs; not in words
onely, but in woes also: and yet there is a vertuous man, whom
I haue often noted in thy company, but I know not his name.

Prin. What maner of man, and it like your Maiestie?

Fal. A goodly portly man I faith, and a corpulent, of a cheere-
full looke, a pleasing eie, & a most noble carriage, & as I think,
his age some fittie, or birlady, inclining to threescore, and now
I remember mee, his name is Falstaffe: if that man should bee
lewedly giuen, hee deceiue me. For Harry, I see vertue in his
lookes: if then the tree may bee knowne by the fruit, as the
fruit by the tree, then, peremptorily I speake it, there is vertue in
that Falstaffe, him keepe with, the rest banish: & tel me now,
thou naughtie varlet, tell me, where hast thou bin, this month?

Prin

of Henry the fourth.

Prin. Dost thou speake like a king? do thou stand for me, and
Ile play my father.

Fal. Depose me, if thou dost it halfe so grauely, so maiestical-
ly both in word and matter, hang me vp by the heeles for a rab-
bet sucker, or a poulters Hare.

Prin. Well, here I am set.

Fal. And here I stand, iudge, my masters.

Prin. Now, Harry, whence come you?

Fal. My noble Lord, from Eastcheape.

Prince. The complaints I heare of thee, are grieuous.

Fal. Zblood, my Lord, they are false: nay, ile tickle ye for a
yong prince I faith.

Prin. Swearest thou, vngracious boy? henceforth ne're looke
on me, thou art violently carried away from grace, there is a de-
uill haunts thee, in the likenesse of an olde fat man, a tun of man
is thy companion: why dost thou conuerse with that trunke of
humours, that boulding hutch of beastlinesse, that swolne parcell
of dropies, that huge bombard of sacke, that stuff cloakebag of
guts, that roasted Manningtree Oxe with the pudding in his bel-
ly, that reuerent vice, that gray iniquitie, that father ruffian, that
vanitie in yecres? wherein is he good, but to taste sacke & drinke
it: wherein neat & cleanly, but to earne a capon & eat it: where-
in cunning, but in craft? wherein craftie, but in villanie? where-
in villanous, but in all things? wherein worthy, but in nothing?

Fal. I would your grace would take mee with you, whome
meanes your grace?

Prince. That villanous abominable misleader of youth: Fal-
staffe, that olde white bearded Sathan.

Fal. My Lord, the man I know.

Prin. I know, thou dost.

Fal. But to say, I know more haime in him then in my self,
were to say more then I know: that he is old, the more the pic-
tie, his white haies doe witnesse it, but that he is sauing your re-
uerence, a whoremaster, that I vtterly deny: if sacke and sugar
be a fault, God helpe the wicked; if to be old and mery be a sin,
the many an old host that I know is damn'd: if to be fat, be to be
hated, the Pharaos leane kine are to be loued. No, my good lord,
banish Peto, banish Bardol, banish Poinces, but for sweet lacke

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Falstaffe,